

Congressman to Host Second Meeting Today for Republic Windows and Doors, Union & Bank of America

December 8, 2008

Rebecca Dreilinger (202) 225-8203

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Chicago, IL) U.S. Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez is engaging the U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Justice to investigate a Chicago company that, on Tuesday, Dec. 2, abruptly gave its 250 workers three days notice. With the holiday season less than three weeks away, Republic Windows and Doors appears to have violated the WARN Act by leaving employees without compensation and without health insurance.

Gutierrez is asking federal authorities, as well as the Illinois Department of Labor and Illinois Attorney Lisa Madigan, to consider immediate action into any violations the company may have made, including whether the factory illegally took initiatives to recapitalize and relocate operations out of Illinois.

On Monday afternoon, Dec. 8, Rep. Gutierrez (D-IL) will hold a meeting with representatives of Bank of America, Republic Windows and Doors and the United Electrical Workers. Immediately following the meeting, Rep. Gutierrez will hold a press conference to provide updates regarding the ongoing negotiations.

What:

Press Conference to update status of ongoing negotiations among Republic Windows and Doors, Bank

When:

6:00 pm, Monday, December 8, 2008

Where:

Republic Windows and Doors, 1333 N Hickory Ave Chicago, IL

"I don't believe somebody woke up on Tuesday and simply decided to shut the doors," Rep. Gutierrez said. "If Republic doesn't want to show their books, I have to wonder if it's because they're moving operations to another state, recapitalizing, leaving debt and a lot of pain and misery behind. They have a legal obligation to their workers, and I'm not going to let this be until the workers get the compensation and benefits they have earned and are legally entitled to."

As Congress returns to Washington this week, the Financial Services Committee will hold a hearing to look into the use of TARP funds, of which Bank of America received at least \$25 billion. Union workers feel this obliges the Bank to support the company. As a senior member of the committee, Rep. Gutierrez will address this issue before Congress.

Under federal law — the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act — an employer must provide 60 days notice of a plant closing or mass layoffs. Less notice is acceptable only if the company meets one or more of the specific exceptional circumstances in the Act. Republic has not claimed any of these exceptional circumstances. Since Friday, the workers, represented by United Electrical Workers, have peacefully occupied the plant in shifts.

Republic Windows and Doors has indicated that they will not pay any remaining vacation that employees earned this year, nor will they pay what is required by the WARN Act, because Bank of America will not authorize payment. Bank of America has stated that it has not asked Republic Windows and Doors to break the law.

###

